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News Notes

from the COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE U.S.A.
475 RIVERSIDE DRIVE NEW YORK 27, N. Y.

addressed to those who are concerned with Christianity and Higher Education

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THE SLINGS AND ARROWS OF THE OUTRAGEOUS FEARFUL

To those of us who plod rather than plot in our unradical day-to-day work as members of the staff of the National Council of Churches, the furious attacks of the frantic right in California, Texas and elsewhere are slightly bewildering. In addition to bewilderment, we feel the bite financially when contributions are cut and we are forced to make extra appeals for support. Sometimes it becomes quite personal as in the experience of one of our CHE staff members whose relatives are somewhat embarrassed by his professional connections and don't want their friends to know about him. To travel in Southern California is to have the new experience of appreciating what our Negro friends must suffer all the time - an uneasy sense of uncertainty as to how you will be received.

There is not much we can do about it except try to keep the un-hysterical informed of the facts so that they can make more and more people aware that attacks on the NCC are really attacks on the churches it serves and represents. To the best of our ability we will supply corrective information. (Write to Dr. Murray Steadman, NCC, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, New York.)

Some helpful books and articles:

1. "Communism and the Churches" Ralph Lord Roy, Harcourt Brace, 1960
2. "Apostles of Discord" Ralph Lord Roy, 1953
3. "Houston's Superpatriots" Harpers, October, 1961
4. "Saving America, Inc." an article on Billy J. Hargis - The Nation, September 30, 1961.
5. "Inside the John Birch Society" by Gene Grove, a Fawcett paper back
6. "The Un-American" by Frank J. Donner, a Ballantine paperback, 60¢ (101 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York)
7. An Introduction to "Operation Abolition" - an eight-page leaflet from U.S. National Student Association (3457 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 4, Pennsylvania)

Our travel this summer made us aware of the degree to which ignorance of the NCC and its operations make it possible for people to believe some of the wild and wierd things that are said. This ignorance extends to the work of the Commission on Higher Education and its Units. On very few campuses did we find people even reasonably well informed on:

The Commission on Higher Education
The Faculty Christian Fellowship
Campus Christian Life
The National Student Christian Federation
The World Student Christian Federation
The Christian Scholar
The Council of Protestant Colleges and Universities

To simply list these titles emphasizes the problem. Only the professionals can be expected to keep up with what these organizations are and what they are doing. If the professionals can keep informed they can help us interpret to others how these ecumenical agencies can help and strengthen local programs and enable local programs to assist and strengthen the

To help this situation we enclose a new Commission leaflet which will at least inform people on what the Commission and its Units is. (The leaflets are free in small amounts up to five, two cents each for quantity orders.) We also mention that so far as is possible the members of the staff of the Commission will accept invitations to visit and speak at local campus gatherings, regional gatherings, and denominational assemblies. Such appearances may be to interpret the work of the Commission and its Units or to bring information in some area in which we are individually competent. We list from time to time our travel schedules but if several invitations come from an area or region, other schedules may be arranged where several appearances may make the cost of assisting in travel to each nominal.

OPPORTUNITIES

A new issue-Christian Horizens lists "urgent needs by more than forty Protestant mission boards and agencies" for mission callings in many parts of the world. Needed are teachers in all areas, nurses, doctors, social workers, experts in communications, and agriculture, secretaries, engineers. (Commission on World Mission, NSCF, 475 Riverside Drive, New York.)

MSM CONFERENCE MATERIAL AVAILABLE

The M.S.M. Bulletin for October reports that the 7th Quadrennial Conference of the Methodist Student Movement was a most significant assembly. The platform addresses are available on tape ($9.00 per set). Excellent discussion material. (Write Mr. William Corzine, P.O. Box 871, Nashville 2, Tennessee.)

Available from Woodrow Geier at the Nashville address are two new volumes in the Methodist series of "Studies in Christian Higher Education."

- Teaching in a Christian College ($1.25) by Myron Wicke
- Substance and Spirit in Education ($1.50) by Kenneth Irving Brown

Other resource material:

WCC THEME

- Jesus Christ - The Light of the World, a study guide on the theme of the New Delhi Assembly of the WCC theme: "Witness, Service and Unity." Well worth study by campus groups.
- "Christian Ethics and the Sit-in" by Paul Ramsey.
- Perspectives on a College Church, ed. Marilee K. Scaff, Association Press. Since mentioning this in the last issue, we have read it and commend it as a stimulating report on a suggestive experiment.

REPORT ON THE CLAREMONT EXPERIMENT

Some conclusions:

- College students today are open to religion but are not specifically Christian in their religious interests.
- The significance of commitment as an indispensible element in the Christian faith is neither readily understood nor accepted in the college community.
- Worship is not considered really important by most students, including many who call themselves Christian.
- Students as a group are dubious about the value of denominationalism.

EXCELLENCE

The Education Section of the October 21, 1961 Saturday Review is well worth examination. Louis Benezet of Colorado College has an excellent article on Excellence.

WHAT IS IT?

"What it comes to in the main is that the professor today is finding it increasingly feasible to create students in his own image....Not much progress has yet been seen concerning an Excellence as it might refer to how we can produce people who show a more sympathetic awareness of society's demands upon themselves; a keener interest in tackling our hardest problems such as integration, over population, farm surpluses or world peace; more careful and impartial reasoning on public issues; creative imagination; livelier appreciation of order and beauty as preconditions for the good city; concern over national stagnation and cheapened ethics; or deeper thinking about the implications of the scientific revolution, which as C.P. Snow observes have been more fully grasped by the Soviets than by the Western peoples."

PARADOX AND PROMISE

Mention is made of a new book we wish to read by our friend and member of the Philosophers and Theologians Consultation, Harry Broudy, Paradox and Promise - a collection of essays on American life and education. (Prentice-Hall, 1961, $1.95)

During visits to a number of colleges and universities this summer we asked questions about The Christian Scholar. The general reaction seemed to be one of strong approval though it was admitted that it is tough reading for some and that not all issues are read through. However, even then it is being valued as a reference - especially the particular topical issues. VOLUNTEER SALESMEN WANTED

All of which suggests the question as to how many libraries have the Scholar available? Readers of the Scholar could perform a significant service if they:

- Made an effort to see that the Scholar is on the reading racks of college and university libraries.
- Encouraged college and university book stores to display it.
- Encouraged city and community libraries to put it on the periodical racks.
- Encouraged local churches to make it available.
- Sent us the names of people who might be interested in seeing specimen copies.

While under no illusions that the Scholar will ever be a popular magazine we are surprised at the number of people interested in the questions of faith and learning who have never seen or heard of The Christian Scholar. Can you help them get acquainted?

Secretary Ribicoff was pretty blunt with the educators at the opening of the Annual Assembly of the American Council on Education. Our failure to push for a good education bill lead him to wonder if the educators really believed in education. All we seem to want is the little part of it we are concerned with. It's time we realized education is a single whole and we'd better be working for the improvement of all of it. I was reminded of the almost identical words used by Kathleen Bliss to a group of British educators. She, too, was critical of the failure of those in higher education to concern themselves with what happens in elementary, secondary, technical, teacher training institutions. What happens there determines in large part what happens in the university and we'd better be aware of it. WHEN THE TIDE RISES ALL SHIPS RISE

Following Ribicoff, Edward R. Murrow outlined the work of the U.S.I.S. Considering what Murrow can do with ideas it was rather uninspiring. However, he did tell one story, perhaps apocryphal, which we are sure will often come to mind as we watch some of our T.V. shows and their even more inane advertising. He said that as Churchill prepared to return to naval operations at the outbreak of the war he received a letter from a U.S. lecture promoter offering him $2,000 a lecture for 30 lectures across the U.S. Churchill couldn't believe it and when his secretary assured him it was a genuine offer he muttered, "This must be the only example in history of a nation moving from barbarism to decadence without passing through civilization." MURROW

For several years now there has been discussion of plans for aiding higher education by means of some sort of tax credit. The general idea is that a student or his parents would be able to deduct part of what is paid for tuition and fees from the income tax assessment. Different plans have suggested different amounts, up to $350-$450, $750 or a percentage such as 30%. TAX CREDIT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

This was discussed at a breakfast meeting in Washington by a number of college presidents. Support for the general idea was pretty unanimous but there was considerable difference when specific proposals were presented. Three questions proved troublesome and gave concern: QUESTIONS

- Is such a plan sound in principle and not a violation of a fair tax structure? Why shouldn't other good causes get similar assistance?
- Would the plan be supported if it was presented as a means of helping colleges and universities and not just individuals students? Can the institution honestly seek its support on any other basis?
- What help would it be to the family that has such low income as to pay very little income tax? Able students from such homes need the help most.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN STUDY CENTERS

A most hopeful development is the proposal of the Division of Higher Education of the United Presbyterian Church, USA to establish centers for the study of Christian Faith in Higher Education that will provide disciplined study and preparation of faculty and students, training for pastors and others related to the work of the church in academic communities, and opportunities for conversations between faculties of graduate professional schools, with laymen in related vocations.

These are conceived as centers where through (1) developing thought and experience; and (2) wide participation of faculty, administrators, students, university pastors, pastors of churches in colleges towns, foundation boards members, professional leaders in the church, the role of the church in higher education may be strengthened and extended.

The hope is that through this plan the work of the church may be extended more effectively into the life of new and as yet unreached campuses and to augment the ministry on campuses served by university pastors. Present plans call for establishing at least one, and hopefully three, centers by July 1, 1962. Eventually there will be four or five located across the country. Other denominations are being invited to participate in the centers, in sponsorship, budget, and policy formation as well as program.

AMERICAN LUTHERANS AND HIGHER EDUCATION

The Report and Findings from the Higher Education Workshop held by the Board of College Education of the American Lutheran Church looks as though a very stimulating and worthwhile conference was held. The American Lutheran Church merges three, what were formerly separate, Lutheran bodies and finds itself quite heavily involved in concerns of higher education. The Workshop was held to try to answer two basic questions: "What is the status of higher education in the American Lutheran Church?" and "What are the principles and ideas which would guide the church in this area of its work in the next several years?" There were a number of addresses, including one by Dr. Morris Wee, on "Should the Church College Survive?" and another on "What the Church Expects of its Colleges" by Dr. F. A. Schiotz. In addition there are reports from a number of working groups on such topics as "The Relationship of the Church and Higher Education." The working group on "Our Relationships with the World in Which We Work" says, "We urge that priority of attention be given, now, to specific action designed to improve drastically the theological competence of our college faculty people." In one of the addresses Dr. Gould Wickey is quoted as saying, "It is just as appropriate to think of a college-supported church as of a church-supported colleges" This, we feel, is worth underlining.

ON THE CERF SIDE

Since the colleges are now looking over their new freshman classes it is perhaps not out of place to repeat a story told by one of the speakers. The father of a boy applying for admission to a certain men's college found this question in the questionnaire: "Is your boy a follower or a leader?" The father thought carefully and decided that his boy, while quite able, was more of a follower than a leader and said so. In due time he got a letter back from the Office of Admissions which said, "We are happy to inform you that your son has been admitted to the class for next fall, and we are especially pleased that in a class of 249 leaders we will have one follower."

Another academic comment was picked up by our good friend Roy Fairchild. "Old presidents never retire, they simply lose their faculties." Less academic but familiar to all of us, this description of the junction of an over-pass and freeway: "A car-strangled spanner."

Hubert C. Noble
General Director